

Madam Chair and Committee Members

I'm Ann Moody (M-O-O-D-Y) and my 89 year old mother is a resident at Big Sky Care Center. I'm here as a proponent in support of the Senior and Long Term Care Division budget request .

This budget request affecting Certified Nurses Assistants matters deeply to me. I have been in and out of Big Sky almost daily for over 3 years and have watched the care mother receives. CNAs like Jason who just spoke provide the care Mom needs daily - even hourly. Macular Degeneration has taken her sight and increasing dementia clouds her mind. The CNAs help her bathe and dress, read mail to her, change her hearing aid batteries, care for her if she is sick. She can no longer trim her finger and toe nails, read a clock or find her toothpaste or hair brush. CNAs in particular help her with all these details of living that we all take for granted.

Thirty years ago Mother was Chairman of the Board of Directors of the National March of Dimes and President of the Board of Regents of a University in Illinois. She worked with several Presidents on other national issues involving health and education. Dementia is taking her memory, but not her intellect. As I watched Mom adjust to Big Sky I have watched the care she is given - as a mother Grizzly watches her cub. The staff has been patient with me. Mom's care is given with respect. And I see this same care given to all the residents.

Because of CNAs at Big Sky Care Center who care for my Mother, she feels cared for, cared about. Although mother is a private pay resident, she would directly benefit from this proposal as would all residents at Big Sky. This Direct Care Wage Increase would help provide the funds necessary to keep qualified, caring, experienced CNAs.

I urge you to support the budget request that will raise wages for the direct care workers.